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The VIGILANTE

WHACK

"EAST IS EAST--AND WEST IS WEST--AND NEVER THE TWAIN SHALL MEET"--SO GOES AN OLD SAYING. BUT THEY DO MEET IN THIS INCREDIBLE STORY OF STRANGE ADVENTURE IN MODERN CHINATOWN--THE CASE OF THE BAMBOO DAGGER!

FOLLOW THE VICTORY TRAIL OF THE VIGILANTE AS HE PROWLS THE LABYRINTH AVENUES OF CHINATOWN IN A HUNT FOR A MADMAN MURDER MASTER AND BRINGS BACK FACE TO AN HONORABLE RACE BY DESTROYING -- THE HEAD!

NEW YORK'S CHINATOWN---- WHERE CLINGS THE HONORABLE TRADITIONS AND CUSTOMS OF A RACE ALMOST AS OLD AS TIME ITSELF---

THEN INTO PEACEFUL CHINATOWN ONE EVENING REACHES THE WHITE HAND "TENTACLE OF TERROR"---

NO FUNNY BUSINESS NOW! MY "TERROR FINGERS" ITCH!

GIVING A SPEECH, FELLOWS?

THE TRIO OF WHITE MEN ENTER THE INNOCENT-LOOKING CURIO SHOP. THE TOUCH OF A SECRET BUTTON--AND THE REAL WALL SWINGS BACK---

WHAT A LAUGH! THE HEAD HAS HERE RARE BLOOD-LUST AND TORTURES!

BUT BEST OF ALL THE BOSS HAS BRAINS! THAT'S WHAT YOU NEED TO LICK THE LAW, SUCKER!

I WROTE THE LAVISHLY FURNISHED ROOM. ONE OF THE CRIMINALS PUTS A FLAME TO A PIECE OF INCENSE-
I FEEL LIKE ALADDIN LIGHTIN' HIS LAMP WHENEVER I DO THIS--BUT IT'S THE ONLY WAY I KNOW TO SUMMON THE HEAD!
SOFT, BILLOWY CLOUDS OF SMOKE ROLL OUT FROM THE BURNING INCENSE. THERE IS THE CLOYINGLY SWEET ODOR OF ORIENTAL PERFUME. THEN--THERE'S A SET IN THE SMOKE--THE MAN SEES--
THE HEAD!
YOU HAVE SUMMONED ME, BUDDY. WHAT THE MATTER IS IMPORTANT--FOR YOUR SAKE!
IT SURE IS BOSS LEFTY AND WE FOUND OUT THAT THIS GUY IS A STOOL PIGEON--WORKIN' FOR THE COPS!
THERE IS ONLY ONE PENALTY FOR TRAITORS--THE BAMBOO DEATH!
MOMENTS LATER--AND THE LUCKLESS VICTIM IS SUBJECTED TO AN INSIDIOUS DOOM
ONLY LITTLE DROPS OF WATER--ONE AT A TIME--BUT THEY--DRIVE HIM CRAZY!
HE'S GOT THE LAW DON'T RUN--HA! HA!
HOUR AFTER HOUR THE TINY DROPS OF WATER BEAT A RHYTHMIC TATTOO OF DOOM ON THE HELPLESS MAN'S FOREHEAD UNTIL EACH DROP SEEMS LIKE A SLEDGE-HAMMER BLOW---
STOP POUNDING THAT DRUM--STOP POUNDING THAT DRUM!
LATER--
THE UNFORTUNATE SPY IS NOW BUT A SHELL OF A MAN! OBSERVE HIS FACE CAREFULLY--IT MAY HAPPEN TO YOU! AND NOW--GET READY FOR THE JOB ON HOP
MORNING SWIFTLY THE TWO WHITE MEN DISGUISE THEMSELVES AS MEMBERS OF THE NATIVE LOT.
WE LOOK LIKE CHINKS NOW--EH, PAL?
SHUT UP--LET YOUR HATCHET DO YOUR TALKING FROM NOW ON!
OH, WHAT A FATE! OHAN, BOHAI!

MIDNIGHT--AND THE TWO RENEGADE WHITE MEN STALK AN UNSUSPECTING GUARD, LIKE WARY JUNGLE TIGERS--
A HATCHET HAS IT ALL OVER A BAT--NO NOISE, NO MOTION!
SH!--HERE HE IS!
IS EVIL IN AIR! THIS PERSON WISHES NIGHT WOULD END!
AAH-H-H-H
LET HIM HAVE IT!
INSIDE THE WAREHOUSE--ANOTHER GUARD FALLS VICTIM TO THE RUTHLESS RAIDERS--
NOW YOU CAN GUARD THE BONES OF YOUR HONORABLE ANCESTORS!
NICE WORK, PAL! HE WAS JUST ABOUT TO SOUND THE BURGLAR ALARM!
SWIFTLY, SILENTLY, THE HENCHMEN OF DEATH LOAD THEIR SILKEN LOOT ABOARD A WAITING TRUCK--
HURRY UP, BLOOEY! WE GOT A FORTUNE OF THE STUFF ALREADY!
THE NEXT MORNING--AND PEACEFUL CHINATOWN IS THROWN INTO AN UPROAR!
CHINATOWN NEWS
GUARDS MURDERED IN HOP WING'S SILK WAREHOUSE--
AT THE HOME OF LIN CHOO VENERABLE PATRIARCH AND WISE OLD LEADER OF THE WHITE LOTUS TONG--
DO YOU KNOW THAT THIS HATCHET BELONGS TO ONE OF YOUR TONG MEMBERS?
HATCHET LIKE COFFIN--MAN HAVE MANY OWNERS!
A STRONG CHAIN OF CIRCUMSTANTIAL EVIDENCE IS FORGED AND THE AGED PATRIARCH SOON FINDS HIMSELF AN OUTCAST!
AW, DON'T YOU GUYS GET WISE TO YOURSELF? CAN'T YOU SEE THEY'RE TRYING TO MAKE A FALL GUY OUT OF MY GRANDPOP?
EVIL, LIKE OPIUM, HAS ROBBED LIN CHOO OF HIS TRUE SENSE!
LIN CHOO HAS A NEW GOD--GOLD!

IN ANOTHER PART OF THE CITY, DEED SANDERS, THE PRESS TROUBADOUR, CONFERS WITH HIS PUBLICITY AGENT--
I TELL YOU, MR SANDERS, THE IDEA IS THERE!--JUST WHAT IS NEEDED TO PUT YOUR FIRST ANNIVERSARY ON THE AIR OVER WITH A BANG!
GO ON--YOU INTEREST ME!
YOU'RE RADIO NUMBER ONE, GLAMOUR BOY, MR SANDERS! WELL, TONIGHT WE'LL ALL GO DOWN TO CHINATOWN--HAVE A DINNER PARTY AT THE "FAR EAST CLUB"--CAN'T YOU SEE THE HEADLINES--"WEST GOES EAST"!
THE WEST GOES EAST--
OF COURSE, BETTY, I'D RATHER EAT SOURDOUGH BISCUITS AND BACON THAN THIS CHINESE GRUB!
HE'S TOLD SO MANY PEOPLE HE COMES FROM THE WEST HE'S ACTUALLY BEGINNING TO BELIEVE IT!
JUST ONE MORE MR SANDERS!
EVENING--AND PHOTOGRAPHERS HAVE A FIELD DAY SHOOTING PICTURES OF THE COLORFUL SCENES OF WESTERN BALLOU!
LATER--AND DEED SANDERS TAKE A STROLL THRU THE CROWDED CHINATOWN STREETS--
THERE'S SOMETHING EXCITING ABOUT CHINATOWN, DON'T YOU THINK SO?
I GUESS SO! THINGS CERTAINLY HAVE BEEN POPPING HERE LATELY--WHAT WITH THESE SIX KILLINGS!
SUDDENLY--
HUH?
COME BACK AND FIGHT, YOU SISSIES! I'LL BET YOUR WAGON!
WHAT'S YOUR HURRY, YOUNG MAN? DON'T YOU THINK YOU'D BETTER COOL OFF FOR A MINUTE?
BALOONY! LET ME GO, YOU DUDE COWBOY! I GOT SOME GUYS I AIN'T TO POLISH OFF!
5

WHAT'S THE TROUBLE, KID? CAN I HELP?
WOW! A DRUG-STORE COWBOY LIKE YOU CAN'T HELP ME! MY GRANDPOPS IS JUST WAITIN' UP FOR HIS BAIL. THAT'S WHY ALL THE KIDS ON MY BLOCK ARE TEASING ME! I GOTTA HELP HIM BUST THE RAP!
MAYBE I CAN'T HELP YOU, BUT I SUPPOSE I GOT YOU THE ASSISTANCE OF A REAL COWBOY— THE VIGILANTE!
THE VIGILANTE! HOLY COW! MISTER—HERE'S TOPS! HE'D SHOW THE GOONS WHO ARE FRAMING MY GRANDPOP HOW TO BITE THE DIRT! CAN YOU REALLY GET HIM?
I'LL TRY, LAD! GIVE ME THE NAME AND ADDRESS OF YOUR GRANDFATHER AND I'LL TRY TO GET THE VIGILANTE TO BE AT HIS HOUSE TONIGHT!
THE BIG MOMENT COMES THE NEXT CHILD FALLS ASLEEP!
LATER—AND EVERY GANGSTER RECOGNIZES ONCE AGAIN THE VIGILANTE, NEMESIS OF ALL CRIME—
THIS CHINATOWN MAY BE FULL OF MORE RATTLESNAKE HOLES THAN A WHOLE FOREST!
THE VIGILANTE HASTENS TO THE HOME OF THE VENERABLE LIN CHOO—
HERE HE IS, GRANDPA, JUST LIKE I SAID! BOY, WITH HIM ON OUR SIDE WE'LL MAKE THOSE WISE GUYS EAT DIRT, OR MY NAME AIN'T FUEE!
HONORABLE VIGILANTE MUST EXCUSE DISTRUSTFUL GRANDSON—
TELL ME HOW I CAN HELP YOU!
FOR LONG MINUTES THE LAWMAN FROM THE WEST AND THE PATRIARCH FROM THE EAST HOLD CONVERSATION. THEN—
I'LL DO WHAT I CAN, BUT YOU'LL HAVE TO LEND ME SOME STUFF... I DON'T KNOW MY WAY AROUND CHINATOWN!
NOT ONE I'M GONNA PROWL AROUND WITH THE VIGILANTE!
LATER—
THIS IS THE WAY WE PLAY BELOW THE LEADER AROUND HERE! C'MON, VIGILANTE!
WHAT A JOY!
MEANWHILE, IN THE STREETS BELOW TWO SINISTER FIGURES EMERGE FROM THE SHADOWS!
HE'LL NEVER KNOW WHAT HIT HIM!

THIS WILL BE ANOTHER MURDER CHALKED UP AGAINST UN CHOO!
LIKE AN UNCOILED COBRA A STRONG A DEADLY HOOKIE HISSES OUT...
THE VIGILANTE!
LETS GO STUFF!
YIPPEE!
A HUMAN HURRICANE DESCENDS UPON THE TWO CHINESE MONSTERS!
I'M KICKING THE GONG AROUND!
HELLO CHUM!
STILL WANT TO BE A FOLLOW THE LEADER? TRY THIS STUFF!
BOP
TRY THIS ON YOUR OWN VIGILANTE- A CHINESE HANDSHAKE!
NOT BAD STUFF! HOW'D YOU DO IT?
JU-JITSU! THAT'S HOW WE MOBILIZE THE KIDS ON AN ATTACK!
AND ACROSS THE STREET A PAIR OF BALEFUL EYES SURVEY THE VIGILANTE'S VICTORY!

HERE'S YOU ARE, CHON. THEY'RE ALL YOURS!
THANKS— THEY'LL MAKE ME A SERGEANT FOR THIS!

THESE MATCHES— THEY'RE MARKED WITH THE SYMBOL OF THE WHITE LOTUS TONG!
USE YOUR HEAD, KID! THEY'RE TRYING TO FRAME YOUR GRANDFATHER. BUT WHY

CHON, RAT! WHAT'S YOUR MONICKER? YOU'D BETTER SPILL!
MY NAMES NO LIE. WHAT'S IT TO YOU?
YEAH AND I'M HIS BROTHER, JUNG LEE!

PRESENTLY— AND THE CHINESE YOUTH WHIPS OUT HIS HANDKERCHIEF AND REMOVES YELLOW GREASE PAINT FROM THE FACES OF THE TWO CRIMINALS!
JUST AS I THOUGHT!

THESE CROOKS AIN'T CHINESE— THEY'RE WHITE MEN!

EXPLANATION, PLEASE, STUFF! HOW DO YOU TUMBLE?
THEY SAID THEN WERE BROTHERS. IF THEY WERE REAL CHINESE THEIR FIRST NAMES WOULD HAVE BEEN SIMILAR. THE FAMILY NAME ALWAYS GOES FIRST AMONG AN PEOPLE!

SUDDENLY—
BONG
BONG
BONG
BONG
BONG
BONG

THE SIGNAL!
JUST WHEN I WAS ENJOYIN' EVERYTHING PEACEFUL!
AREN'T YOU GOING TO HOLD ME UP?
NAW! THAT CAN WAIT—THE SIGNAL!
WELL, FINISH THIS FIGHT SOME OTHER TIME! THE HEAD CALLS!
UH! DAT'S DOWN WITH ME!
BONG
BONG
BONG
BONG
BONG
BONG
YEAH—IN FRONT OF THE SMALL BUILDING ON WOTT STREET! HURRY UP!
IT'S THE VIGILANTE! GET HIM!
HE SHOULDA STAYED OUT WEST!
WHEW!

THE THUGS CLOSE IN---
GREETINGS, MATE - YOU'RE A LITTLE LATE.
HELLO LAD, I'LL BET YOU'RE MAD!
BUTTON! BUTTON! RIGHT ON YOUR BUTTON!
UGH!
BUT THE OVERWHELMING ODDS EVENTUALLY PROVE TOO MUCH FOR THE VIGILANTE--
WAIT TILL THE HEAD SEES THIS EGYPT-SPINNING PUNK!
LEMME GO, YOU BIG APE!
THE VIGILANTE SOON FINDS HIMSELF AT THE GANG'S HEADQUARTERS- A VICTIM OF THE CRUEL CRIME CHIEFTAIN!
THE HEAD OUGHT TO COME OUTTA THAT SMOKE IN A MINUTE!
THAT SMOKE SURE SMELLS SWEET- ALMOST MAKES ME FEEL SLAPHAPPY!
ONCE AGAIN THE SMOKE THINS OUT... AND THE HEAD, MYSTERY VILLAIN, ADDRESSES HIS MEN--
GOOD WORK, MEN, CAPTURING THAT MEDDLER, THE VIGILANTE. A FIT SUBJECT FOR THAT INGENIOUS EXECUTION DEVICE--THE BAMBOO DEATH!
THE FATAL DROPS DROP DOWN UPON THE CRIME-FIGHTERS, THROWN IN A WEIRD RAIN OF DEATH-
THE CUNNING DEVILS WON'T BE THE FIRST POOR SOUL DRIVEN MAD THIS WAY!
SILENCE REIGNS AS THE BAND OF CRIMINALS LISTEN TENSELY TO THE OMINOUS PATTER--
UHH! WHAT A HORRIBLE FATE!
I'M GLAD DAT AIN'T ME!
SUDDENLY AN IDEA IS BORN IN THE VIGILANTE'S MIND- AS ALL EYES ARE FOCUSSED UPON HIS FOREHEAD, HE MOVES HIS FEET SLIGHTLY TOWARD THE ELECTRIC WIRE ON THE WALL--

BACK AND FORTH THE ACE COWBOY RUBS THE SPUR OVER THE WIRE--UNTIL THE METAL ROTS THRU THE INSULATION AND CAUSES A SHORT-CIRCUIT OF THE LIGHTING SYSTEM--
QUICK, STUFF--DO YOUR STUFF!
GOOD! NOW, I PRACTICE MY JU-JITSU HOMEWORK!
UNDER COVER OF THE DARKNESS, STUFF RACES OVER TO THE VIGILANTE--
YOU'RE PIGS NOW, PAL--LET'S TAKE 'EM!
STRANGE, BUT I'VE GOT THE SAME IDEA!
THE BEAM OF A FLASHLIGHT SWEEPS OUT AS THE POWERHOUSE DOOR BURSTS INTO DRAMATIC ACTION!
GET 'EM, MEN!
BLACKOUT FOR YOU!--IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE!
THE FLYING FISTS OF THE VIGILANTE STAMPEDE THE CRIMINAL HORDE--
KEEP 'EM FLYING!
LET'S SCRAM!
OUT OF THE MAGMA OF SMOKE EMERGES THE HEAD--IN THE FLESH!
YOU COWARDLY PIGS--COME BACK! DON'T LEAVE ME NOW!
JUST AS I THOUGHT! HE'S NO SPIRIT!
WELL, LET'S GET HIM--HE MUST MOVE ME!

HEAD--YOU LOSE!
RICH MAN, POOR MAN, BEGGAR MAN, THIEF!
HE AIN'T SUCH A BIG SHOT NOW, EH, VIGILANTE?
THEY'RE ALL SMALL FRY IN THE LONG RUN--AND THIS ONE'S GOING TO FRY IN THE HOT SEAT!
THE LAST ROUND AIN'T OVER YET, COWBOY!

THE KOREN EYES OF THE RANGE LAWMAN SPY A SINISTER TATTOO ON THE ARM OF THE OUTLAW--
THAT TATTOO! THE SIGN OF THE DAGGER OF KALI--A SOCIETY OF JAPANESE SECRET AGENTS!

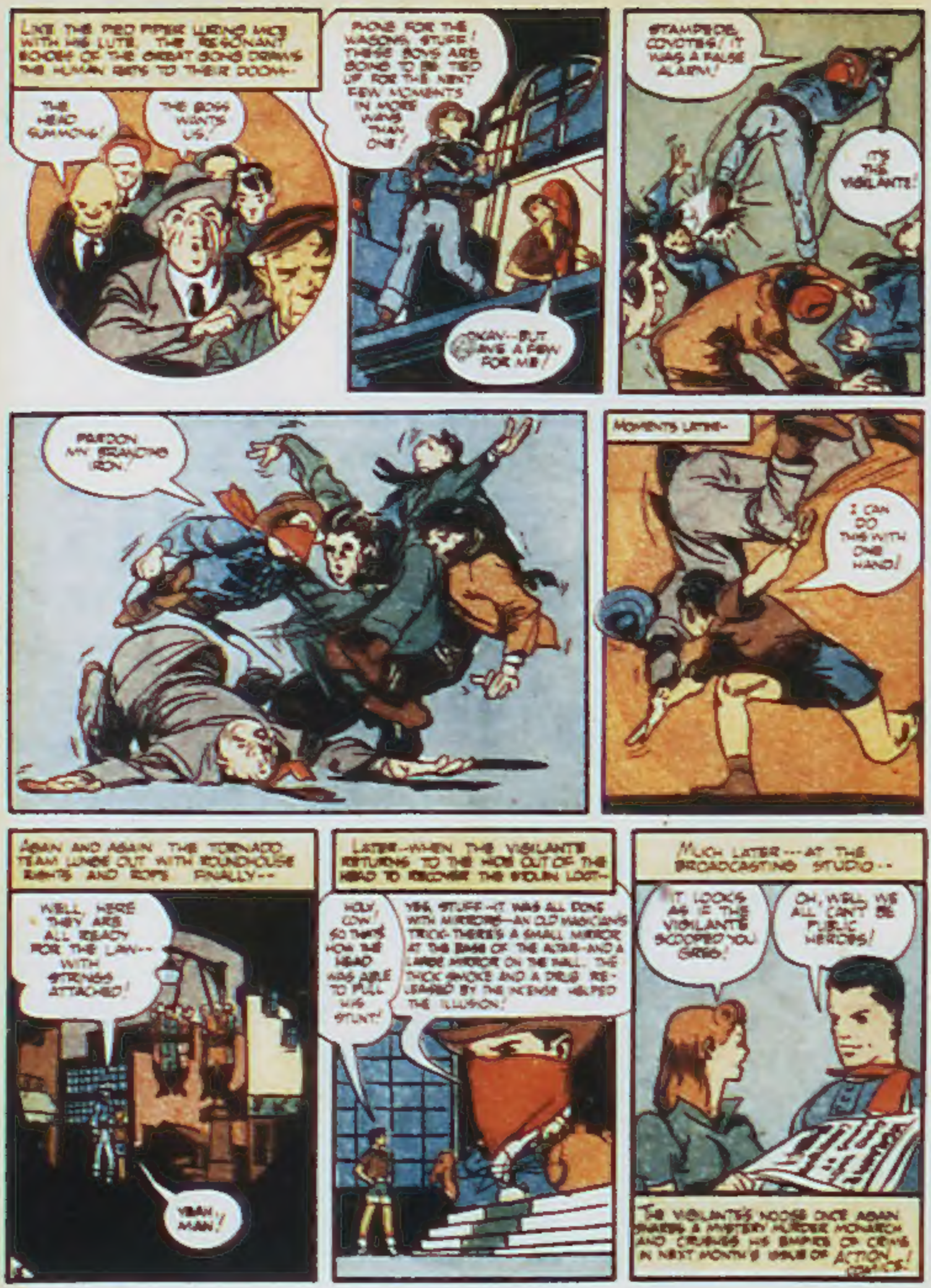
SURE, MY JOB IN THIS CITY WAS TO START A TONG WAR IN CHINATOWN--MAKE THE CHINESE FOLK SO OCCUPIED WITH THEIR OWN TROUBLES THEY WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO HELP THEIR MOTHER COUNTRY!

LATER--AT THE HOME OF AGED LIN CHOO
THE HEAD IS NOW SAFE BEHIND THE BARS--AND THE MEMBERS OF YOUR TONG MAY ONCE AGAIN WALK THE STREETS OF CHINATOWN UNASHAMED!
MY THANKS ARE AS COUNTLESS AS THE GRAINS OF SAND O HONORABLE VIGILANTE!
STILL IT, GRANDPA, SAVE THE CONGRATULATIONS UNTIL WE HAS THE REST OF THE GANG!

I MUST APOLOGIZE FOR IGNOBLE GRANDSON. HE IS--AS YOU AMERICANS SAY--NOT DRY BEHIND EARS!
OH STUFF'S ALL RIGHT--AND HE'S TELLING THE TRUTH! OUR JOB ISN'T OVER YET!

PRESENTLY--AND THE TWO COMPANIONS ONCE AGAIN RACE FLEET-FOOTED OVER THE CHINATOWN STREETS--
WHERE TO, PARTNER?
IT'S ROUND-UP TIME, BUTTON! FOLLOW ME!

MOMENTS LATER AND THE PARTNERS IN PERIL, INSIDE THE DESERTED WAREHOUSE LAST FREQUENTED BY THE HEAD--
THIS BROUGHT THE RATS OUT OF THEIR HOLES ONCE--IT'LL WORK AGAIN!
NOT BAD, NOT BAD! WHY DON'T I THINK OF THE IDEA?


LIKE THE PIED PIPER LURING MICE WITH HIS LUTE, THE RESONANT NOTES OF THE GREAT SONG DRAWS THE HUMAN RATS TO THEIR DOOM--
THE HEAD SUMMONS!
THE BOSS WANTS US!
PROVE FOR THE WAGONS, STUFF! THESE BOYS ARE GOING TO BE TIED UP FOR THE NEXT FEW MOMENTS IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE!
OKAY--BUT SAVE A FEW FOR ME!
STAMPEDE, COYOTES! IT WAS A FALSE ALARM!
IT'S THE VIGILANTE!
PARDON MY REACHING ON!
MOMENTS LATER--
I CAN DO THIS WITH ONE HAND!
AGAIN AND AGAIN THE TORNADO TEAM LUNGE OUT WITH ROUNDHOUSE RIGHTS AND ROPE FINALLY--
WELL, HERE THEY ARE ALL READY FOR THE LAW-- WITH STRINGS ATTACHED!
YEAH, MAN!
LATER--WHEN THE VIGILANTE RETURNS TO THE HIDE OUT OF THE HEAD TO RECOVER THE STOLEN LOOT--
HOLY COW! SO THAT'S HOW THE HEAD WAS ABLE TO PULL HIS STUNT!
YES, STUFF--IT WAS ALL DONE WITH MIRRORS--AN OLD MAGICIANS TRICK--THERE'S A SMALL MIRROR AT THE BASE OF THE ALTAR--AND A LARGE MIRROR ON THE WALL. THE THICK SMOKE AND A DRUG RELEASED BY THE INCENSE HELPED THE ILLUSION!
MUCH LATER--AT THE BROADCASTING STUDIO--
IT LOOKS AS IF THE VIGILANTE SCOOPED YOU GREG!
OH, WELL WE ALL CAN'T BE PUBLIC HEROES!
THE VIGILANTE'S HOOFS ONCE AGAIN SHAKES A MYSTERY MURDER MONARCH AND CRUSHES HIS EMPIRE OF CRIME IN NEXT MONTH'S ISSUE OF ACTION COMICS!